THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) About 110 metre portion of the Kharagpur side embankment on the right hand side approach road to Road Over Bridge in Km. 19 of National Highway No. 6 in West Bengal subsided on 09.02.2006.

(c) and (d) No, Sir. Detailed survey and soil investigations are carried out for individual projects and designs of various road features are made by specialised consultants, keeping in view the site conditions and specific local requirements to achieve the prescribed standards. The standards are contained in the norms/guidelines of Ministry of Shipping, Road Transport & Highways, Indian Roads Congress and Bureau of Indian Standards. In the absence of any specific norms the international norms are followed.

(e) and (f) National Highways Authority of India has constituted an Enquiry Committee comprising former Director General (Road Development), Ministry of Shipping, Road Transport & Highways and professor of IIT Kharagpur who is Geo-Technical expert, to investigate the reasons and circumstances leading to failure of the approach road of ROB and to suggest remedial measures.

Setting up of Indian Maritime Service Cadre

*162. SHRI B.K. HARIPRASAD: Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any efforts have so far been made to set up an Indian Maritime Service Cadre;

(b) whether such a move will efficiently serve the requirements of all maritime related positions like shipping, light houses, sea ports, vessels, etc.; and

(c) whether Government are considering a proposal from Indian Maritime Industry to employ foreign officers on case to case basis if Indian hands are not available for such positions?

THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) and (b) The creation of a pool of maritime experts in various fields related to maritime sector has been

considered necessary in the interest of improving Indian Mercantile Marine Administration. The matter regarding setting up of Indian Maritime Service cadre out of this pool is under examination.

(c) No such proposal is pending with the Government.

Repayment of loans to Asian Development Bank

*163. SHRI JAI PARKASH AGGARWAL:
SHRI AJAY MAROO:

Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the National Highway Authority of India has defaulted in repayment of loans to the Asian Development Bank;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the action taken/proposed to be taken against the officers responsible for this lapse?

THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) and (b) National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) repaid the first instalment of Asian Development Bank (ADB) Loan amounting to US $ 43,08,820.36 (Rs. 19,14,40,889) for Surat-Manor Tollway Project on 10.01.2006, 9 days beyond the due date of 01.01.2006. The delay was due to lapse on part of the concerned officers.

(c) A fact finding enquiry has investigated into this lapse and based on the enquiry, one Dy. General Manager (Finance & Accounts) has been placed under suspension and one General Manager (Finance & Accounts) who was on deputation to the NHAI, has been repatriated to the parent organization.

Implementation of Central Right to Information Act

*164. SHRIMATI HEMA MALINI:
SHRIMATI MAYA SINGH:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have ensured that the Central Right to Information Act is being implemented throughout the country;

(b) whether any States are lagging behind; and